
Motor Vehicle Operator's Handbook

Accident Awareness

Most accidents are caused by personal error rather than equipment failure and are usually due to a combination of factors such as:

- Driving when fatigued;
- Following too closely;
- Changing lanes without signaling;
- Diverted attention (considered by safety personnel to be among the top contributing factors in motor vehicle accidents);
- Failure to yield right of way;
- Speed too fast for conditions;
- Improper turning; and
- Improper backing

The observance of courtesy, care, proper speed and road ethics is the key to accident prevention.

NOTE: An unsafe driving record and / or failure to comply with administrative requirements and responsibilities governing the use and operation of an assigned / rented vehicle may result in suspension or revocation of the U.S. Government Motor Vehicle Operator's Identification Card and the prohibition against operating a Government-owned or leased / rented vehicle.

Statement

I have been authorized to operate a Federal vehicle in the performance of official business. I certify that I have read and fully understand the policy, guidelines and procedures for the operation of Government-owned or leased/rented vehicles in OPM's "Motor Vehicle Operator's Handbook" and GSA's "Vehicle Operator's Manual."

I understand that while driving a Federal vehicle in the performance of official duties, I am responsible for any fine or penalty imposed for violation of State or local traffic laws or ordinances and agree to pay any such fines or penalties as required.

I also understand that a valid State, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or U.S. possession operators license or permit is required to operate a Federal vehicle on Government business.

I further understand that under section 638a(c)(2) of title 31, United States Code, employees who willfully use Government vehicles for other than official purposes are subject to minimum mandatory disciplinary action of thirty days suspension without compensation.

Group

Name

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I. Introduction

This handbook outlines your responsibilities as an authorized user of a Government vehicle and provides advice on safety awareness; proper maintenance and repair methods; when and how to use Government credit cards; privately-owned vehicles; fuel-efficient driving tips; motor vehicle safety and accident reporting.

Consult the manufacturer's manual, Interagency Motor Pool System (IMPS), or a vehicle maintenance and repair specialist for information on care of a particular vehicle.

This publication supplements detailed regulations and policies in OPM Administrative Manual Supplement 42-2, Motor Vehicle Operation, with which every employee should be thoroughly familiar before operating a motor vehicle on official business.

II. Using a Government Vehicle

A. Obtaining a Vehicle

Government vehicles are assigned to Government agencies for use. They are available on a disengaged basis from General

- Observe the vehicle to detect scratches or body damage. Report any damage to the dispatcher before moving vehicle.
- Check parking spaces for evidence of fluid leaks.

B. Reporting Vehicle Use

Instructions for reporting GSA vehicle usage should be in the operator's packet in the glove compartment of each vehicle. If not, ask the dispatcher for the packet. Two forms are used for reporting vehicle usage:

GSA Form 312—Motor Vehicle Dispatch Record (3-copy set)—used for daily dispatch (29 days or less)

GSA Form 494—Monthly Motor Vehicle Record (2-copy set with business reply envelope)—used for long-term assignment service

Handling of GSA Forms 312 and 494:

- Do not fold or mutilate.
- Print or type legibly.
- Keep forms out of extreme heat or direct sunlight.
- Enter all required information as instructed on the forms or by the IMP Dispatch Office.

Usually, most of the data to be entered on GSA Form 494 will be preprinted by the IMPS.

Dispatch Vehicles (GSA Form 312)

When picking up a vehicle:

- Provide the IMP dispatcher with the OPM entity's Billing Office Account Code (BOAC), Item 6, and last six digits of cost center code, Item 9.
- If information is not known, ask your supervisor.
- Ask the dispatcher to assist in entering the required information in the proper box. d so c s.

- Retain the Customer Copy (printed on bottom center), and deliver the agency copy to your supervisor, administrative, or financial office.

Assigned Vehicles (GSA Form 494)

The OPM office/person responsible for a vehicle or group of vehicles will receive a GSA 494 in the mail each month. Long-term assignments (30 days or more) require entering the following information on the form as instructed on the reverse side of the second copy.

- Accountability To assist in the accountability of funds, check all columns, especially 7, 10, 11, and 12 (BOAC No., Project No., Vehicle Class, and Tag No., respectively) and ensure that all preprinted information is correct. If the information is incorrect, draw a line through the entry and enter the proper data.
- Date of Odometer Reading Unless otherwise specified by the IMP (Item 16) enter the date as instructed on the reverse side of the second copy.
- Odometer Reading At the end of the reporting period, enter the odometer reading to the nearest whole mile in the blank space (Column 13). Ensure that the actual mileage is entered to the immediate right of the corresponding vehicle Tag No. (Column 12).
- Condition of Vehicle When necessary, call the servicing IMP if the vehicle condition requires maintenance/repair and in the event of an accident. The telephone number is preprinted under the IMP address in the upper left-hand corner of the GSA 494, Block 3.

in travel status, or performing temporary official duty in a remote field location. The operator is responsible for the proper use, servicing, and protection of the vehicle while it is in his or her custody, and for reporting any accidents in which the vehicle is involved.

Do Not:

- Use the vehicle for private business, personal errands, recreation or any other unofficial purpose.
- Transport members of your family or personal friends. Exceptions can be made in a serious emergency or when prior authority has been obtained from a group, office, or regional director (or designated representative) for a change in post or duty station, including details within or to another region.
- Park a vehicle at places of amusement unless actually conducting official business at that location.
- Use a vehicle for transportation to or from work to domicile unless a valid *Authorization to Use Government-Owned or Leased Vehicle Between Domicile and Place of Employment*, OPM Form 716, has been obtained from the group, office or regional director and the motor pool issuing the vehicle has been furnished a copy.

Note:

- It is **mandatory** that any employee who willfully uses or authorizes the use of any Government-owned or leased/rented vehicle for other than official purposes be suspended without pay for no less than one month, or suspended for a longer period or summarily removed if the circumstances warrant (see Chapter 735, Appendix A-11, of the Federal Personnel Manual and 31 U.S.C. 638a(c)(2)).

- **The Office of the Inspector General** is responsible

dealer will repair the vehicle at no cost to the Government. Warranty information is contained in the GSA packet.

- Minor emergency repairs and replacements as authorized on the SF 149, credit card.
- Other than as listed above, contact the IMP for instructions for handling unscheduled or emergency repairs.
- Repairs exceeding \$50 require the prior approval of the IMP. Business and emergency telephone numbers for IMP personnel are furnished with the GSA packet.

IMP authorization for repairs will normally be with a service facility under GSA contract. At such facilities, do not use the SF 149. Your signature that repairs were made authorizes GSA payment after direct billing. You should obtain a copy for your administrative office/supervisor and request the service facility manager to mail two copies (original plus one) of the invoice to the IMP providing your vehicle(s).

Before signing the invoice, make sure the service facility has recorded GSA authorization and then certify that the repairs were necessary to:

- Make the vehicle safe to operate;
- Prevent additional damage;
- Put vehicle in an operable condition; or
- Other explanation, as applicable.

If you must pay cash:

- Obtain an itemized receipt in duplicate and note the circumstances.
- Contact your supervisor for proper reimbursement action.

The following safeguards should be followed in the use of the SF 149 credit card:

- Remove the credit card, ignition keys and lock all doors and windows when the vehicle is left unattended.
- Keep the credit card in your possession when the vehicle is left at a commercial facility for parking, servicing, inspection or repairing.

1. Scheduled Preventive Maintenance (PM)

GSA schedules and monitors performance of PM by computer analysis and computer-generated GSA Forms 3478 and 3478-A. We urge all supervisors and operators to properly maintain their assigned vehicles.

When PM is due for a vehicle, the responsible OPM person will receive a GSA Form 3478, *Motor Vehicle Service Authorization* (two copies and a business reply envelope, inside a blue outer envelope). Please note the following:

- Items 6 and 7 indicate class and tag number of the vehicle for which the PM is due.
- Items 11 and 12 indicate mileage or date, whichever comes first, by which the PM should be accomplished.
- In the lower right quadrant of the form under *Preventive Maintenance to Be Performed* are listed the action(s) to be taken to maintain the vehicle.
- Read the *Instructions to Operator* (above Items 6 through 15) on the *Motor Equipment Division Copy* and *Instructions to Vendor* on the *Motor Pool Copy*.
- Take the vehicle to the Interagency Motor Pool listed in Item 2 or to a vendor to have the PM performed.
- Give the *Motor Pool Copy* to the vendor and retain the *Motor Equipment Division Copy* and business reply envelope.
- When the PM is completed, sign the *Motor Equipment division Copy* (Item 13), record the mileage on the odometer (Item 14), and the date (Item 15). Make a photo copy of the Vendor's Invoice or credit card receipt and the properly completed GSA Form 3478 for your administrative files.
- Mail the *Motor Equipment Division Copy* using the pre-addressed business reply envelope.
- Instruct the vendor to mail two copies of his invoice (one to OPM and one to GSA).

- Items 11 and 12 indicate the mileage or date, whichever came first, at which PM became overdue.
- Have PM actions listed on the previous GSA Form 3478 performed immediately and report accomplishment by mailing the Motor Equipment Division Copy using the business reply envelope.
- If PM has been accomplished or a GSA Form 3478 was never received, contact the IMP listed in Item 2.

2. Unscheduled Preventive Maintenance

If you experience maintenance problems anytime between scheduled PM, you should contact the IMP servicing your area for guidance.

Note: If you experience problems with the local IMP pertaining to maintenance, repair or safety, notify your supervisor/administrative/program officer who should take action to resolve the problem(s). If feasible, take the vehicle to the nearest IMP for emission control system maintenance and each 12,000-mile interval inspection. Tuneups, chassis lubrication, oil and filter changes should be performed only as the PM schedule requires unless prior approval has been obtained from the IMP.

F. Parking

Whenever possible, store the vehicle at a Government parking facility. If none is available, an employee on an itinerary may claim parking or storage fees by attaching the receipt and claiming on SF 1012, *Travel Voucher*. Government employees who operate Government-owned, leased/rented, or personal motor vehicles for official purposes should pay parking meter fees and will be reimbursed unless payment for parking is not required under local law, such as that which applies in Washington, D.C.:

e e h e i e t i f e d b y t s l i c e n s e p l a t e , a s

Owned Vehicle (POV)

Use of privately-owned vehicles for official travel may be authorized when:

- A GSA vehicle is not available.
- It is determined to be more economical and advantageous to the Government.
- An employee elects in writing, for personal convenience, to use a POV for a specified time in the conduct of official OPM business.

Damage to or Loss of Privately-Owned Vehicle

Under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees' Claims Act of 1964, 31 U.S.C. 240-243, and Part 180 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, OPM employees may submit claims for damage to or loss of personal property incident to their service. However, as a rule, the provisions of 5 CFR Part 180 do not cover claims for damage to or loss of an employee's privately-owned vehicle. The current mileage reimbursement for use of a POV has been calculated to permit purchase of extra insurance. Employees using POV's for conducting official business should purchase additional coverage through their own automobile insurance companies. Employees using privately-owned vehicles are responsible for obtaining and carrying OPM Form 720, *Accident Reporting Kit*, while on official business, and following accident reporting instructions on pages 11-13 of this manual.

IV. Motor Vehicle Accidents

Do Not Sign or Make a Statement as to Responsibility

—except to supervisor or Government investigator.

- Be courteous, do not engage in arguments at the accident scene.

A. Forms

If driving a Government-owned or leased/rented vehicle, use the following forms contained in the information packet located in the glove compartment:

- GSA Form 1812, *What to Do... If You Have an Accident.*
- CA-1, *Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation.*
- SF 91-A, *Investigation Report of Motor Vehicle Accident.*
- SF 94, *Statement of Witness.*
- Optional Form 26, *Data Bearing Upon Scope of Employment of Motor Vehicle Operator.*

If driving a privately-owned vehicle, use the OPM Form 720 envelope which contains forms CA-1, SF 91, SF 91-A, SF 94, and OF 26.

A commercially leased or rented vehicle will also have a company accident form which must be used.

B. Obtain the Facts

- The names and addresses of all persons involved and extent of injuries, if any.
- The names and addresses of each witness. Request witness(es) to complete and sign SF 94, *Statement of Witness.*
- Registration information on other vehicle(s) involved and permit data of other driver(s).
- When requested, give similar information to other drivers and law enforcement officials.
- Obtain scene of the accident details, such as:

if possible, should be completed at the scene of the accident.

- Submit the narrative and completed report forms required in Section IV-A to your supervisor.

C. Make an Immediate Report

- If an accident is serious, report by telephone to your supervisor.
- If damage is to a GSA vehicle, also notify the IMP manager where the vehicle was issued.

Make a written report to the State Motor Vehicle Department or other authority as required by the locality in which the accident occurred.

- Request local/State forms and information from law enforcement official(s).

Operator Injury

- Complete Form CA-1, *Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/ Compensation*.
- If physically incapable, have the local/State law enforcement officials or hospital staff prepare the Form CA-1.
- Use credentials, OPM Identification Card, or SF 46 to establish Government employee status for obtaining emergency first-aid treatment and/or hospital care.

D. Claims for Damage

- Refer any claim for damages or injury against the Government to your supervisor.
- Any claim for damages or personal injury arising from an automobile accident must be submitted on SF 95, *Claim for Damage, Injury, or Death*.
- Notify and deliver to your supervisor all the required forms in Section IV-A, and all legal processes and papers resulting from a accident.

VI. Six Tips for Fuel-Efficient Driving

1. Combine Short Trips

The worst mileage performance is registered on trips of 10 miles or less in a car that hasn't been driven for several hours. Plan your day's driving assignments.

2. Accelerate Smoothly

Avoid jackrabbit starts but get to cruising speed as soon as traffic conditions allow. More gas is used in accelerating than cruising. Once you reach cruising speed, maintain a light foot on the accelerator.

3. Watch Your Speed

Maintain your car's most efficient speed as closely as law and safety allow. The optimum cruising speed for most cars is between 40 and 50 miles per hour.

4. Keep Your Distance

Tailgating, causing repeated acceleration and braking, wastes gas. Leave room to react between you and the cars around you. Anticipate traffic flow, red lights and stop signs.

5. Minimize Road Resistance

Keep tires inflated to the maximum pressure indicated on the sidewalls. Underinflated tires can reduce mileage by one mile per gallon or more and cause tread to wear faster. Close windows at highway speeds and use the internal vents for air circulation.

6. Keep Your Vehicle in Tune

Two fouled plugs can cost 20 percent of your gas consumption. Always follow the manufacturer's recommended

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Motor Vehicle Safety

1. **Drive courteously and defensively.** The most important safety factor in auto transportation is the driver.
2. Make sure your vehicle is in safe operating condition.
3. Observe speed limits. Remember, the maximum speed is 55 miles per hour (90KPH).
4. Adjust head restraints so that your head centers on the restraint.
5. Be sure all occupants fasten their seat and shoulder belts before driving away.
6. Lock the transmission in park and set the parking brake before leaving the vehicle.
7. Use the rear view and side view mirrors and turn signal before moving from one traffic lane to another.
8. Drive defensively according to both road and weather conditions.
9. In the event the vehicle becomes disabled or stopped, use the flasher lights or other emergency warning measures.